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The Maytime, Starbright, and Redstar Strawberries

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INTRODUCTION

Three new varieties of strawberries are named and described in this publication. They are named respectively Maytime, Starbright, and Redstar. In eastern Maryland, Maytime has been earlier, and Redstar has been later, than any standard variety now in the trade, when grown under the same conditions. Starbright is a handsome midseason variety of good quality.

All three varieties are being introduced by cooperating nurseries. The United States Department of Agriculture has no plants for distribution.

MAYTIME

The Maytime is being introduced as the earliest variety of high quality in Maryland. It is recommended for trial from Virginia to southern New Jersey and westward to Oklahoma and Kansas.

Origin and Description

Maytime (U. S. D. A. 2267) originated as a cross between Missionary and Fairfax made by George F. Waldo in 1931 and was selected in 1933 for propagation. It has been outstanding for its earliness, high quality, and firmness in eastern Maryland, and this characterization is based on its growth there.

Compared with Blakemore, under normal conditions it has been some 4 days earlier in season, much sweeter in flavor, deeper red in color, and about as firm. It has produced well in matted rows. It has been earlier, firmer, and more highly flavored than Howard 17 (Premier) in eastern Maryland. It has also been earlier, firmer, and

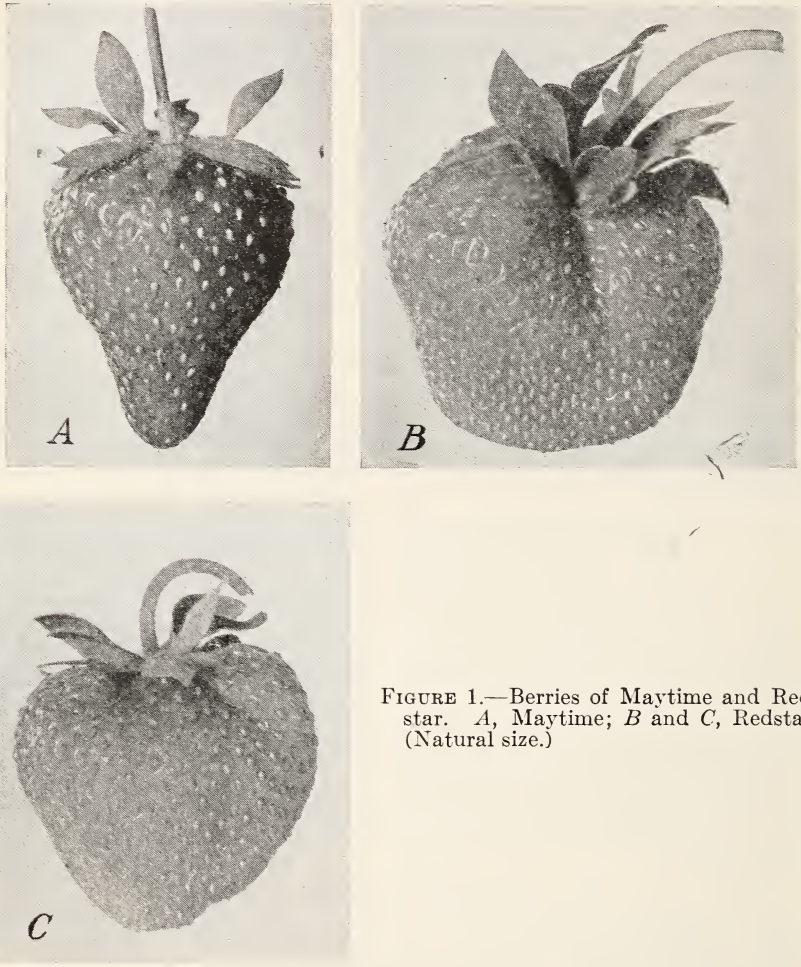

FIGURE 1.—Berries of Maytime and Redstar. *A*, Maytime; *B* and *C*, Redstar. (Natural size.)

sweeter than Missionary and has not turned so dark when held after picking. It has not been so large as Dorsett, but it has set more of its flowers and has been earlier and firmer than that variety and sometimes as good in dessert quality.

It produces runner plants very freely, and a matted row is readily formed. The leaves thus far have been free from scorch and usually, but not always, from spot. The flower clusters are beneath the leaves and so are protected somewhat against frosts. The flowers produce pollen in abundance. The variety has been productive.

The berries average large at first and medium in size later in the season. The primary berries are wedge or conic in shape and the rest conic. They are very smooth and uniform (fig. 1, *A*).

The flowers contain abundant pollen, and the berries have been unusually well developed, indicating adequate fertilization. The seeds are about even with the surface and are yellow, turning red on the exposed side. The skin of the berries is glossy and a rich red that is very attractive in the basket. The color does not turn dark on holding. The flesh is a rich red throughout and is juicy. The flavor is subacid, somewhat more tart than Dorsett but much less acid than Missionary and Blakemore. The dessert quality is high.

One fault is that this variety blossoms so early that its first flowers are likely to be injured by frost. When this occurs ripening is later than normal and the yield is reduced.

Technical Description of Fruit

Primary berries sometimes wedge-shaped, sometimes conic with broad shoulder; later berries conic; uniform, size large, pubescence on pedicel ascending; calyx somewhat clasping, average size; ripens uniformly; color glossy rich red; seeds yellow, even with surface; flesh rich red, juicy; shipping quality very good; flavor subacid, aromatic; dessert quality very good. Season earlier than those now in the trade.

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STARBRIGHT

The Starbright is being introduced for trial as a midseason commercial and home-garden variety of great beauty. It has also very good dessert quality and is one of the best varieties for shipping. It is recommended for trial for the general markets from Virginia to New Jersey and westward to Kansas and Iowa.

Origin and Description

Starbright (U. S. D. A. 2120) originated as a cross between Chesapeake and Fairfax made by George F. Waldo in 1931 and was among the selections made in 1933. From the first fruiting of the plant it was notable for its beauty and high quality.

It has produced plants more freely than Chesapeake and has been much less subject to leaf spot. It is slightly earlier and the berries are sweeter and firmer with a tougher, glossier skin than that variety. It has grown vigorously on many soils where Chesapeake does not thrive. Compared with Fairfax, it has been slightly later, glossier, lighter in color, has not turned so dark on holding, and has been a little more acid. Its primary berries have not been so large as those of Fairfax, but the berry size has been somewhat better than Fairfax late in the season.

Starbright makes runners fairly freely. The plants are large, and because the runners are long it can be easily spaced. The leaves are large and unusually free from leaf spot and leaf scorch. The flower clusters are large, and the stalks are strong, holding the flowers and fruit off the ground. Its flower stalks are not quite so tall as the leaves and to some extent are protected against frost. The flowers produce a fair amount to a great abundance of pollen. It is fairly productive and its season fairly long.

The berries (fig. 2) are blunt wedge to blunt conic in shape and very smooth and uniform. The seeds are raised and are yellow in color. The skin is very glossy and tough, and the berries have exceptional shipping qualities. Their color is medium bright red, similar to Dorsett; it does not turn dark. The flesh is light red and juicy. The flavor is subacid, about that of Dorsett, but the berries do not usually have quite so much aroma as does Dorsett at its best. The dessert

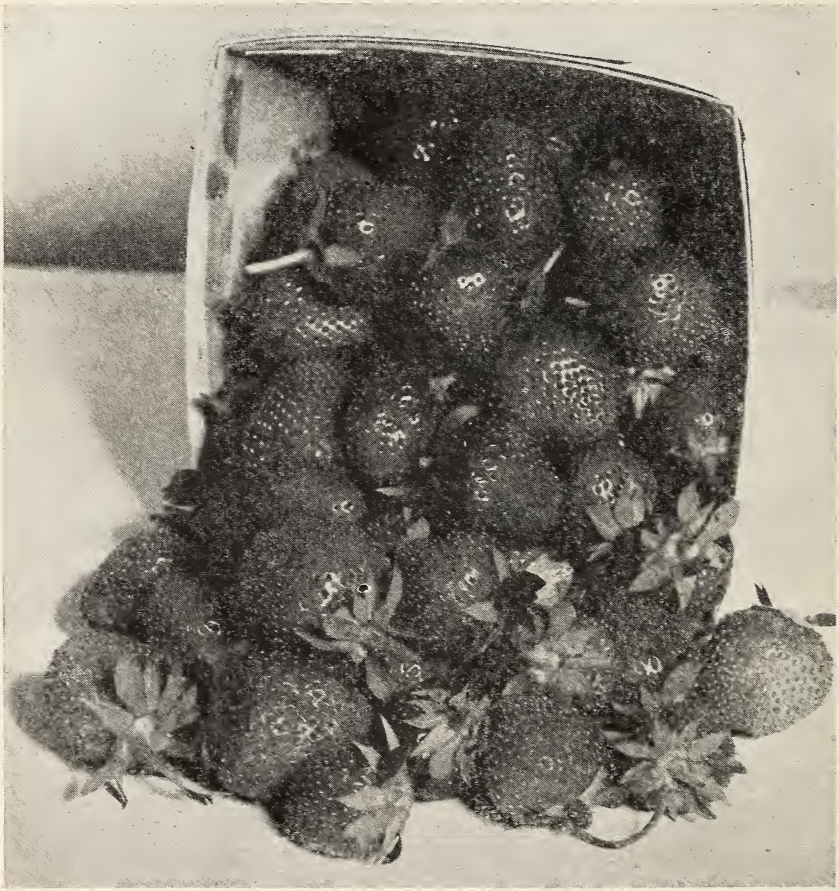

FIGURE 2.—Quart basket of Starbright strawberries.

quality is high; it surpasses that of Chesapeake and at times equals that of Dorsett and Fairfax.

The faults of Starbright are that it is only fairly productive and the plants, though vigorous, do not stand hot weather so well as some varieties do.

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF FRUIT

Form blunt conic, some of primary berries blunt wedge-shaped, very uniform; size large; pubescence on pedicel abundant, ascending; calyx usually clasping,

medium sized; berry ripens uniformly; color bright medium red, very glossy; seeds yellow, raised, medium in size; flesh light red, texture tender; juicy; shipping quality superior to most varieties; flavor subacid, aromatic; dessert quality high. Season about with Catskill in Maryland.

REDSTAR

The Redstar is being introduced as a very late, firm commercial and home-garden variety of exceptional beauty. It has very good dessert quality and is recommended for trial in all Northern States as far south as Virginia and west to Missouri.

Origin and Description

Redstar (U. S. D. A. 2124) originated as a cross between Chesapeake and Fairfax made by George F. Waldo in 1931 and was among the selections made in 1933. It has been notable as the latest productive firm variety of exceptional beauty and high quality. It is considerably later than Chesapeake and Lupton and a few days later than Gandy. It produces runners and plants freely. The plants and leaves are very large and so far are remarkably free from leaf spot and scorch. The leaves normally are deep green, glossy and cupped. The flower clusters are large, and the stalks are strong, holding the flowers and fruit off the ground. The flower stalks are relatively short so that the leaves protect the flowers well against frosts. In eastern Maryland even the smaller branch crowns have fruit buds, extending the season to very late. The flowers do not produce much pollen, but usually they are well pollinated, as shown by the uniform fruit. Because of the large, low-branching clusters and the unusually large number to the plant, the plants are quite productive and lend themselves well to spacing and high culture.

The berries have averaged large, the primary berries being very large. They are short conic with a wide shoulder (fig. 1, *B* and *C*). They are sometimes ridged and furrowed and are not so uniform as Starbright. Fasciation occurs sometimes but has not been serious. It might be serious south of Delaware in old plants kept for a second year. The seeds are raised and yellow in color. The skin is tough and very glossy, and the berry is almost as attractive as Starbright. It is bright red in color and does not turn dark. The flesh is a light bright red, juicy but firm. The flavor is rather tart until quite ripe. The dessert quality is very good to excellent, and when the berries are well grown it is equal to the best.

Redstar has shown no faults so far, unless its very large leaves that transpire water freely may be a weakness in dry seasons. Because it is so late, it should be grown on soil retentive of moisture and should be well mulched to help conserve moisture.

Technical Description of Fruit

Form short conic with wide shoulder, sometimes ridged; size very large; pubescence on pedicel rather dense and spreading; calyx reflexed to clasping, medium to very large, with 2 to several rows of leafy sepals on the primary flowers; berry sometimes light at tip; color bright medium red, very glossy; seeds yellow, raised, medium size; flesh light red, texture tender; juicy; shipping quality good; flavor subacid, aromatic; dessert quality good. Season very late; later than Gandy in Maryland and New York.

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